

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 357 210

CE 063 609

AUTHOR Cooper, Maureen, Ed.; And Others
 TITLE Citizenship, Adult Learning and Old Age. Conference Report (London, England, United Kingdom, June 6, 1992).
 INSTITUTION City Literary Inst., London (England).
 PUB DATE 92
 NOTE 50p.
 AVAILABLE FROM Education Resources for Older People, The City Lit, Bolt Court Centre, London EC4A 3DY, England, United Kingdom (3.50 British pounds).
 PUB TYPE Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)
 EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; *Adult Learning; Caregivers; Citizenship; *Educational Needs; *Educational Practices; English (Second Language); Foreign Countries; Futures (of Society); Income; *Older Adults; *Retirement; *Unemployment; Volunteers
 IDENTIFIERS *England

ABSTRACT

This paper contains the text of a keynote speech given at a Study Day attended by older persons and government and industry officials in England, along with summaries of discussion and workshop reports. The keynote speech, "Citizenship, Adult Learning, and Old Age" (Jenny Scribbins), emphasizes the need to recognize the educational requirements of older people as important because of the contribution they made to the economy. The paper then goes on to define exactly what older people do that is work, discussing it in several categories; and concludes that for all the kinds of work identified an educational curriculum is needed. In the participant discussion that followed, many curriculum issues were raised that required more detailed discussion, and these issues were identified in the following six workshops: Maximizing Income (Benefits and Pensions); Maximizing Income (Employment); Women's Studies; English for Speakers of Other Languages and Elderly Refugees; Older People as Carers; and Unpaid Work and Volunteering. Finally, a summary report, "Drawing the Strands Together" (Sue Gardener), reflects on the insights that emerged from the conference. Included in the report are the conference program, a flier for the program, a list of participants, the goals for the Study Day, and survey results from four London-area educational centers on course offerings for older adults and their participation in such courses. (KC)

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Citizenship, Adult Learning and Old Age

Edited by
Maureen Cooper
Zelda Curtis
Pamela Webb

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Published by Education Resources for Older People (EdROP)
The City Lit, Bolt Court Centre, London EC4A 3DY.

DTP Ifeoma Umelo in EdROP
Printed in Great Britain by
Roberts Printers, 198 Garratt Lane, London SW18

Citizenship, Adult Learning and Old Age

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Education Resources for Older People, The City Literary Institute

Acknowledgements

Our task as editors has not been easy because we have had to select from such a wealth of diverse contributions to the message of the report. So our acknowledgements are many and various.

We are grateful to the speakers who were to address the April 1st conference and to those who so ably presented on the 6th June; to the discussion group facilitators and reporters; and to the contribution of all the participants on the day and in the training sessions. Without them there would have been no debate.

As conference organisers we are also grateful to those who so ably assisted us with the smooth running of the day, volunteers and paid workers working over their hours alike; to the administrative and janitorial services so helpfully delivered.

Without the funding support of The City Lit, Charities Projects, Help The Aged and the Workers' Educational Association (London District) we would not have been able to run the training sessions nor produce this report. Our thanks to our funders.

The EdROP advisory committee and its members past and present, have commented on the whole process and given practical help where it was possible.

All that said, the responsibility for the selection of the content and presentation of the material in the report lies with us, the editors.

Maureen Cooper, Zelda Curtis, Pamela Webb October 1992

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Introduction

The advisory committee of Education Resources for Older People at the City Lit (EdROP) identified a need for people over retirement age to have access to training courses for the unpaid work they did in the community. A working party was formed in the Spring of 1991 to plan for a conference. The aim of the conference was to alert policy makers, policy informers and organisations working with and for people in the post-retirement age groups to the necessity of securing educational provision which ensures that older people can update knowledge and skills which contribute to the maintenance of full citizenship status (Appendix 1). Some funding was received from the City Lit Training Unit, Charity Projects, Help the Aged and the Workers Educational Association London District.

The conference was to have been held on 1st April 1992, but just before this date, the Government called a General Election for 9th April. Though MP's and other policy makers wrote supportive letters, none could commit themselves to attending. There was a good response from older people and organisations working with older people, but as the main purpose of the conference was to influence the policy makers, it was decided to cancel until after the election. However, training sessions, which had been offered for older people who wished to develop their conference participation skills, continued (Appendix 2). The costs of this training were met from the grants received.

Then, a Study Day was arranged for 6th June at the Bolt Court Centre, City Lit, which, though less ambitious than originally planned, attracted older learners and people from older people's organisations, Heads of Adult Education Institutes, the Open University, the Centre for Policy on Ageing and the BBC (Appendix 3).

The aim of the Study Day (Appendix 4) was to address the issues of training for continuing citizenship and to develop ideas, in discussion, around five practical curriculum areas of training and education for older citizens:-

- 1(a) Income: Pensions and Benefits
- (b) Income: Employment
- 2 Women's Studies
- 3 English for Speakers of Other Languages and Elderly Refugees
- 4 Older People Who Are Carers
- 5 Training & Skills for Voluntary and Unpaid Work

The issues were discussed in the context that, for the first time, there are more people who have retired from paid work in our society than has ever before been the case. Moreover, retired people are not a homogeneous group. They reflect the differences and inequalities found throughout all age groups. We must therefore look at what people in retirement are doing as citizens and what support education can give them.

The development of a curriculum for citizenship is not an alternative to the leisure and recreation debate, the so-called non-vocational curriculum. It is part of the whole debate about access to learning opportunities which support life changes and the ability to participate as fully as one wishes in society. It is intended to redress the view that vocational education relates only to work in the paid work force. The idea is also challenged that only those in paid work are of value to the community and that once a person reaches retirement age, they become, as they age, an increasing burden to the community.

Citizenship, Adult Learning and Old Age

The keynote speaker was Jenny Scribbins, Principal of Wandsworth Adult College. Jenny Scribbins has contributed enormously to the fight to retain learning opportunities for adults, particularly for those who had few educational advantages in their school years. She is a member of the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education Executive and one of the experts advising the Carnegie Enquiry into Education in Third Age. The following are edited highlights of Jenny Scribbins' presentation.

I think it is important to remind ourselves of the context in which we now meet. Today, public spending, whether through the government or through the local authorities, is continually being scrutinised from two points of view. One, to establish priorities for funding, and secondly, to see whether the level of spending could be reduced or, more appropriately, come from private sources including individuals' pockets.

As far as the education of adults is concerned, the government has now set national priorities, i.e. the gaining of qualifications for work, and they have said that some adult education will be funded nationally by the government through a new funding council. It is becoming clearer that there will not be much room for manoeuvre in that funding and what it can be used for. I expect that a list of qualifications that count for inclusion in that funding will shortly be published and there will be little room for arguing for anything other than those courses that lead to these qualifications.

Local authorities will continue to have an obligation to provide adequate other education for adults but at the same time local authority spending will continue to be the subject of renewed squeeze. It will not be possible to spend even at the rate that they have been over the last few years, so they will have to

prioritise. Within those priorities, the area of discretion for them is reducing because of their statutory duties. There is also a definite question mark over the future of Local Education Authorities. Schools are being encouraged to opt out of LEA control and it is clear that even if LEAs continue to exist they will have a very different function. They are more likely to have a conduit function for government funds than a strategic and planning one.

We have been accustomed to having specialist officers in education authorities over the country, who have a concern for the education of adults. My prediction is that within a year there will be no such posts in LEAs. Someone may have a generic responsibility which includes the education of adults, but the day of the local education officer whose brief is only the education of adults or even further education, will have disappeared.

The context then, for the education of adults, is that part of it will be organised by independent institutions and part will continue to be the responsibility of local authorities, but they will have to look for different ways of discharging that responsibility. One of the ways that is open to them is to define the rest of education, that doesn't come under the funding council, as leisure education and put it under their leisure departments or organise it in the way they organise the rest of their leisure activities. Of course, as soon as we say leisure the connotation of that is that it's something that doesn't matter, not something that is a priority for public funding. In that context we have a real obligation to re-analyse what goes on in the name of education, to see if we can give it another label than leisure. Can we describe it differently, can we describe its importance? We may wish to spend considerable time and energy in re-asserting the rights of individuals to stimulus and life long learning, but though that may make us feel good and assert things that we believe very strongly, I do not think that it's going to butter many parsnips!

We also have to remember what is happening demographically. We mustn't just think of now. We have to think of ten and twenty years hence. A greater proportion of the population is becoming over 60 and patterns of work are changing, so increasingly people are in initial education longer. They then have a shorter period of their life in paid work. In ten or twenty years time the proportion of people who are in full time work over 55, or even 50, will be very much lower. The question is, how are smaller numbers of people in full time work going to support an increasingly large number of people with pensions. We could expect there would be increasing pressure for people not to live solely on their pensions.

As politicians tend to work on the short term, it has to be for people like us to do some sharp analysis and forward thinking, otherwise the sort of infrastructure that we have got now for providing educational opportunities for people will have gone in 10 years' time and people will have to re-invent the things that exist now, the local opportunities for people to undertake education. So I suggest we need an urgent analysis of what education is already offering to older people (Appendix 5). I don't think we are talking about just a new curriculum. We are talking about looking at what we have and defining it in a new way, because that has become urgent.

We need to define our educational needs as important because of the contribution we as older people make to the economy. Let's use the word work. Let's define what older people do that is work.

I suggest that we have got several categories. Older people work unpaid in the domestic economy. It's something that as women we do all our lives and if we're not careful, we forget it

is work. But what we do know is that if we stop doing that work the entire economy will collapse.

Increasingly those of us who are over 50 are going to be caring for more children and also for more people who are even older than we are. It is very likely that in ten years time I will be looking after one or both my parents. If I do not look after them they will be a burden to public funds. So we have to articulate very clearly the contribution that older people as carers make to the economy. That's unpaid work.

There's also voluntary work, which is a bit different in that it is work we do deliberately not for money. Many spend hours of their lives in supporting various voluntary organisations, whilst others are doing the same work and getting paid for it. Whether it is filling envelopes or organising conferences, voluntary work is the contribution older people make to the life of the community, but we need to use words which have gone out of fashion, like civic obligations. How many people over 50 are engaged in work in local politics, as Governors of Schools or on Trusts? The whole of the education system is now predicated on people being willing to give voluntarily of their time to be the managers of the institutions. They're called governors and there has been a big radio blitz looking for governors. I know where I look. I look among the retired who have skills they are still willing to give unpaid to the management of the institution.

Then there's the area of part-time work. There is plenty of evidence that increasing numbers of people from 55 to 80 are actually engaged in part-time paid work and they are a very necessary part of the workforce. So we have got to stop looking at that as something that we keep quiet about in case it has a deleterious effect on our pension, or in case people kick us out because we're over 60, and really do some analysis of the con-

tribution those people are making to the economy. We do not find it difficult to justify retired lawyers, accountants, judges, coming in as consultants, yet you're not called a consultant when you come in part-time to help run a canteen or to be a car park attendant. It's the same role. You're coming in part-time to use your skills, to do a job for a few hours a week which other people don't want to do because it doesn't suit their lifestyle.

What else do we do as citizens? We look after ourselves, we support our own health and independence. That is a very real contribution to the economy, and it seems to me that any education which helps older people maintain their health and their independence is a direct contribution to society. There are also many older people who, in order to function independently in this society, need to learn basic language skills.

The last thing that I want to say about the citizenship role, which you may find useful to think about, is the role of older people in sustaining cultures. That is different from defining your cultural interests as personal leisure. If you re-interpret that as the role of sustaining and transmitting cultures to new generations, then we recognise it as a function that older people have always performed and that it is now more and more important as we get in to a world of mass mediocre culture. Sustaining cultures is a very important function that is carried out by older people.

For all these things we need an educational curriculum. They are functions vital to society and we need to say what education should offer to support these functions: skill; bodies of knowledge and information in order to perform those functions properly; analytical skills as well as craft skills. Some of us have had little opportunity to learn how to argue our case, and that is also a necessary underpinning for the sort of citizenship I have been talking about.

I don't think many of us want only to have access to that sort of educational underpinning which requires us to do a one year course and sit an exam at the end of it. We probably do not want much vocational education in that form. Who would want to do exams if it was not really necessary? But that does not mean that our education is not important. I am, therefore, delighted that you can spend the rest of the day using some of these pegs on which to hang a more detailed analysis and argument of the value of education to older people in their active citizenship.

Discussion

People raised questions and points for discussion from the floor of the meeting. A wide ranging discussion ensued (a panel of two speakers and the chair woman elaborated on some of the points raised). Some speakers identified themselves as workers in named organisations. Here they express their own views which they do not necessarily ascribe to these organisations.

Speaker 1. You did not mention the influence of technology when you looked into the future. I feel that the leisure society predicted in the 60s, using automation to free people from work they did not want to do, has not happened and in fact automation has been used in a typically capitalist way to put people out of work. I feel we're going to be in a sort of Aldous Huxley society where regimentation is going to be the order of the day. It's already happening now with local democracy. As you pointed out, they're becoming instruments of central government.

Speaker 2. You point up the importance of older people learning and understanding about new technologies. Otherwise what will happen is that the gulf between those who know and can use and operate new technologies and those who can't, will become wider and wider. Those of us who were educated earlier and did not learn to use and control them, could become controlled if we don't know how to use them to benefit ourselves. It's another example of the sort of skills older people need access to.

Speaker 3. I feel one of the most important things is the influence that people can have on the media: the way people are portrayed, the words used when portraying older people. We need to influence the media to get programmes showing older people doing different things and not in the traditional way in which older people are portrayed.

Speaker 4. I work in the BBC education department and I know that we took advice about a particular programme planned for next year and EdROP was part of that consultation. Yes, you must use your power to influence the people who make the light entertainment programmes and the game shows where they say to the contestant "Aren't you wonderful for your age". In the programmes we are planning we're fighting to make sure they aren't stereotypes, and that they actually go some way toward breaking down stereotypes. We are deliberately looking at programmes we could make that do challenge people's views of roles.

Speaker 5. May I ask whether the BBC has an equal opportunities policy that includes something on ageism. Are you willing to employ people over 55 or 60?

Speaker 4. Not over 60

Speaker 5. I'm wondering about that cut-off point at 59 years and 364 days. On the next day do I become incapable? I am wondering why institutions like the BBC, the Civil Service and Educational Institutions have that cut-off point? Has it ever been challenged at the BBC?

Speaker 4. Not as far as I know

Speaker 2. The point is that you retire from salaried employment at 60 but in certain walks of life that doesn't stop you from having very lucrative work for the next twenty years on and off. They didn't retire Lord Clarke from introducing the 'Civilisation' programme because he was over 60. It is to do with economic power. If you have skills that you recognise as packageable and saleable at high prices you could go on working very happily. It's actually people at lower levels who are cut off from access to paid employment.

Speaker 6. What does one say to critics who say that older people, by stepping in and doing the dirty jobs, the part-time jobs, the unwanted jobs in a period of high employment, are depriving people with more needs (with big families, with greater expectations, with mortgages) of jobs. How does one defend oneself against that kind of accusation?

Speaker 7. That old chestnut was always used in argument against women having employment.

Speaker 8. I would answer that here are people who can do things, why are you preventing them from doing it? You can't have it both ways, you can't blame them for not being active if at the same time you are also structuring them as inactive. Take away a discrimination which is purely chronological so that older people aren't seen as a separated-off group. Take economic need as the criteria by which you judge someone's right to go for a job rather than excluding them just because of age, and I think that ageism acts against the young as well as older people. I'd rather not separate and divide old and young in the common struggle to maintain economic status.

Speaker 2. One reason why adults don't get a good deal, particularly from education, is that they are too easily seduced by the argument that younger people are more important. With that argument you are saying there is a finite pool of jobs. In other contexts completely different things are said, like we need an enterprise economy and people who will 'get up and go' to produce goods and services. So if we say that we as older people are ready and willing to do that, and indeed we actually are doing it in quite large numbers, then that turns the argument on its head. The argument we have to use is that a lot of talent is being wasted and the economy could produce more if older people were allowed to contribute to it. And the assumption

behind your question is that the sorts of jobs older people are willing to do are also the sorts of jobs that younger people want and I think that is not true on the whole. What we need to know is what older people are doing, what are they being paid to do, are they the sort of jobs that will take people off the dole queue or not?

Speaker 9. Unemployment is not created by the age limit. It is created by the system we are in. So, if there is unemployment it is up to the powers that be to create employment and not to blame the pensioners for it.

Speaker 10. Now we have retired, shouldn't we have the opportunity to do paid work we are interested in? And with the unemployment situation, surely it would be good government policy to get people into the voluntary organisations (who are finding it difficult to get volunteers) and pay them for it.

Speaker 8. The voluntary/paid work divide has had a long history. There is a clear position within the voluntary sector on what volunteers do as opposed to what paid employees do, and in circumstances of industrial dispute, they are clear how they relate to each other. But this is not an issue that has been explored because the emphasis is that citizenship should mean no cost to central government or the public purse. It's not our place to say "away with voluntary work", but to say what support it should have as of right to ensure that it's done in a non-exploitative way.

Speaker 11. There's lots of us voluntary workers. We're on management committees where we are managing workers and the whole span of what the organisation does, but I feel we're undervalued and undersold. While there is lots of training for people who are paid workers, there's no training for the voluntary workers who do such important work.

Speaker 12. Someone asked where we seek our allies. I suggest we seek them amongst the 10 million pensioners in this country. Don't you agree?

Speaker 8. Yes, there are 10 million pensioners, but they are not a homogeneous group. Join pensioners' groups, co-ordinate pensioners groups, but do not work exclusively in pensioners' groups because individuals have individual interests and need to be locating their activities as free standing citizens in those organisations. That takes me back to an earlier point. I don't want the BBC producing a special curriculum for older people. I want the BBC to include in their programmes real examples of real older people engaged in the real sorts of activities that we all engage in rather than offering us stereotypes.

Speaker 13. We find it very difficult to get our views on ageism over to people from the House of Commons and House of Lords, because they can go on for ever and therefore they can't envisage life without paid employment, without stimulus, without money coming in. I would like to suggest that we have to influence the young people, as early as those in school, as to how they perceive older people. They're going to be the ones who will have the power eventually to provide the money for education for older people. Is there anything taught about ageism in schools?

Speaker 14. Nine years ago we started to link up with a local school. I sat with the children there to do the same exam and got a CSE with top grade.

Speaker 2. That's a wonderful story but I just want to sound a note of warning. Because those things work well sometimes, it's very easy now for people to take the line that if you want educational opportunities for older people you can

just fill in any old spare places that we've got in our schools. The effect of the latest legislation on schools is going to mean that schools and Sixth Form Colleges are going to offer some sorts of educational opportunities to adults. What the range will be and what they will cost and who will have a say as to what those opportunities should be, is not clear. What I am suggesting is that you need to safeguard real choice and a wide range of opportunities.

Speaker 15. For a few years I headed the Education Department of 'Help the Aged', and produced learning materials on ageism for children in infant, junior and secondary schools right across the country. Then 'Help the Aged' saw fit to close that department down. I think that is interesting because the kind of imagery that charities use to fundraise for older people is actually quite demeaning. There is a real gap in provision of positive images of older people.

Now I work in an area of the Open University where I am writing courses which are vocationally orientated and we're currently working on a course called 'Community Care' and another one called 'Ageing in Society'. This course is going to have about 20 hours allocated to pensioners' action, and that is what I am writing. I would be very interested in ways of representing those issues which older people feel important. I do feel that vocational issues are crucial in actually promoting an imagery to older people, and people involved in working with older people, that is more positive and broader perhaps than some of the narrower platforms which a lot of pensioner organisations have operated on up to now.

Use your influence on organisations like OU. They are always looking for consultants and they do pay people. So put that 'spiel' on audio tape because they like to have 'vox pops'. They

like to have real people speaking because it makes good learning material to hear people speaking from the heart about their own experiences. You can have an influence by contributing to the training of the community as a whole.

These are the main points raised in the wider discussion. We needed to deal in more detail with the curriculum issues involved. Participants moved into self-selected workshops to concentrate on a specific issue.



Reports of the Workshops

The workshops considered what aspects of knowledge a learning programme about citizenship should include. The national curriculum defines the minimum that children should learn about in schools in order to prepare them for life in society. The citizenship curriculum we considered in the conference workshops identified areas of knowledge which we as adults, who are operating in the public areas of our lives, require in order to participate fully as citizens.

Without financial security no adult can participate fully as a citizen so two workshops were concerned with how older people can maintain the maximum income possible.

One workshop addressed the learning needs of older refugees and elderly migrants who have no opportunity of participating in public life unless they are able to communicate in the majority language of the country.

Women's Studies has had an important influence on the way that we understand our society. For women now retired or near retirement, some of whom had been active in the women's emancipatory movements, initial education did not use the understandings which these changes have developed. One workshop looked at this.

Caring in the Community is a part of current public debate. For many people in retirement age groups, caring or being a carer is the everyday, private experience. The knowledge and understanding of these roles was the subject of another workshop.

One workshop looked at the issues relating to old age which concerned people who wanted to improve their knowledge and skills in the area of voluntary work.

The six workshops attempted to structure their reports into **identified issues** and **suggestions for action** and this brief section records those reports.

The **issues** identified were:

The necessity to move away from means testing to benefits as a right

Training in the community to get access to full information and updating.

The **actions** recommended were:

Organisations should work together collectively.

There should be innovatory training activities to high levels for claimants' groups.

**Maximising
income: Benefits
and Pensions**

The **issues** identified were:

Ageist attitudes by employers

Limited opportunities for keeping up to date and/or to develop new marketable skills

The **actions** recommended were:

Legislative change to introduce flexible retirement age

Ending ageist discrimination in training and learning opportunities. No age question on application forms.

**Maximising
income:
Employment**

The **issues** identified were:

Women, especially among older people, are a majority but they are treated as a minority.

Women's contribution to society is mostly made in the private, domestic sphere. It has low status because usually it is unpaid.

The **actions** recommended were

Give a high value to women's experience and skills, and acknowledge this when the skills are transferred from the private to the public workplace.

Women's training should include examination of the experience of being treated as a minority and should build understandings and solidarity with other such groups.

Women's Studies

**English for Speakers of
Other Languages and
Elderly Refugees**

The **issues** identified were:

Lack of acknowledgement in our society that people without the majority language are disempowered
Outcomes of ESOL which are measured only in monetary terms

The **actions** recommended were:

Research the details of how many people need and want to learn English in order to challenge the myths that old people do not want to learn.

Devise ways of measuring outcomes to show what are the gains.

Older People as Carers

The **issues** identified were

Carers should have a right to respite from their caring. Caring is a contribution to society and people who do it privately, willingly or unwillingly, should have a right to respite.

People who are carers do not always identify themselves as carers and don't necessarily call upon what support is available

The **actions** recommended were

Advocacy training should be developed and access to it extended

More imaginative ways of delivering care and training for carers should be devised.

**Unpaid Work and
Volunteering**

The **issues** identified were:

Differences between unpaid work and volunteering

Replacement of paid work by use of volunteers, unpaid, where voluntary organisations are tendering for service delivery contracts

The **actions** recommended were:

Volunteers should be included in all offers of training in voluntary organisations

Voluntary organisations should use exemplary, non-discriminatory recruitment practices based on fitness for the job, for volunteers and paid workers. This includes not discriminating on grounds of age.



Drawing the strands together

Good practice in education requires time for reflection. During the day many people who were strangers to each other and who represented diverse interests had come together. We tussled with issues of great concern which had been refocused through the lens of 'citizenship, adult learning and old age'. We certainly needed time to reflect as we had to take back to our organisations the insights we had gained and identify the actions we were going to recommend.

Sue Gardener, a senior adult education practitioner with experience across the self-help, voluntary and statutory sectors had taken the role of observer and reporter for the day and fed back to the participants her observations. She set these in the context of the political changes in local government, education, and health and social services.

She noted that the conference had offered to bring together three complex terms, all of them up for discussion and re-definition: citizenship, vocational and education.

Citizenship was clearly identified in the morning's discussion as the compound of a number of social relationships: the citizen can be a tax payer, charge payer, broadcasting licence payer - and in this set of service user relationships we are being re-defined as "customers", with the notion that the customer has power. S/he can also be a pensioner, with overtones of dependency, or, more actively, a voter, a voluntary worker, a campaigner, a carer or a consultant. Citizenship for many of us speaks of interdependence and continued activity: the curriculum to serve this is not easy to construct if the prevailing ideas are different.

Vocational is also a difficult term when it is being associated either with preparation for entry into the paid workforce or

changing position within it. The conference has re-asserted both the fact that older people do paid work and need skills for it, and that the unpaid work they do has economic as well as social value. This too needs broader recognition before it will be easy to work out and carry out a curriculum to sustain and support older people's work.

Challenges have been set out during the conference to various people and agencies: voluntary services, local and central government, research bodies, the media, campaigning groups. Those of us responsible for the education of adults find challenges and pressure ourselves. The debate about the FHE Bill which has just been enacted turned a lot on the risk that, in defining two channels of funding by their vocational or recreational characteristics, the non-vocational would be devalued.

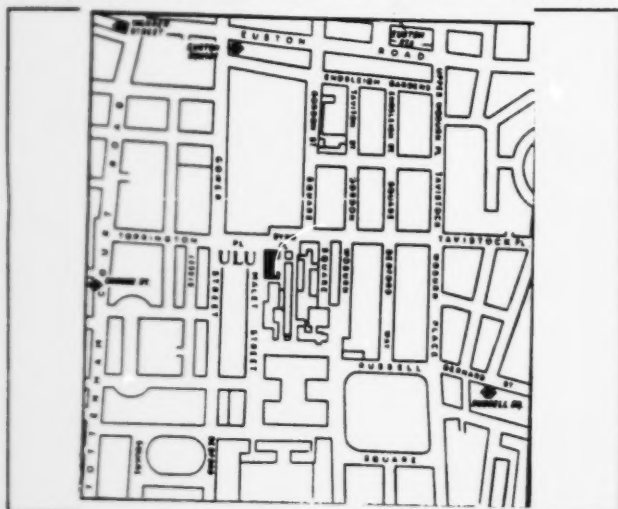
There was also concern that the work that local authorities do would be simply defined as recreational, and so all the possible forms of support for the social contribution of older people would be identified by neither set of criteria, but would fall down the middle. The urgent job for those of us negotiating future provision with local authorities was to see that this did not happen. There was hope that some of the forms of accreditation now being applied to unpaid activity would qualify for funding on the vocational side, which would contribute to a change of perception about its value.

Creating a citizenship curriculum is a challenge to the imagination, and naming the tasks helps us to work at it. Finally, the word "confidence" has been used a lot during the day to denote an area of educational development: it should perhaps be seen as arising out of competence and skill, rather than as something that precedes them. To demonstrate competence is to define our contribution as citizens.



Booking Details

- ❖ Your booking confirmation, receipt and conference papers will be sent to you after March 18th 1992.
- ❖ The University of London Union is in Malet Street, London WC1. A 10 minute walk from Goodge Street and Russell Square underground stations and buses in Tottenham Court Road, Gower Street, Russell Square.
- ❖ The conference rooms are fully accessible by lift and wide door, adapted toilet facilities are available on the ground and the third floors. All facilities are fully signposted.



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- ❖ A hearing loop will be in use in the plenary room and radio microphones supplied to hearing aid users who book them for the workshops.
- ❖ Lunch will be served in the Palms Self-Service Restaurant on the fourth (4th) floor of University of London Union where personal choices to suit a variety of diets will be available.
- ❖ A luncheon voucher will be supplied to all registered delegates at the conference reception.

Please return your booking form before **March 18th 1992** to
 Ifeoma Umelo, EdROP, The City Lit, Bolt Court Centre, London EC4A 3DY.
 Telephone enquires to Ifeoma Umelo 071-583 4748

CONFERENCE

OLDER LEARNERS

Education for Continuing Citizenship

10.00 - 16.00

at

University of London Union
on

April 1st 1992

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Conference Aims

- ❖ The demographic profile of London and the United Kingdom shows a significant increase in the numbers of people in the post-retirement age groups.
- ❖ This conference aims to alert policy makers, policy informers and organisations working with and for people in the post-retirement age groups, to the necessity of securing education provision which ensures that older people can update knowledge and skills which contribute to the maintenance of full citizenship status.
- ❖ The conference forms an important part of the developing debate on intergenerational equity.

Conference Outcomes

- ❖ Raised awareness and understanding of the issues in both participants and in the organisations they represent.
- ❖ The presentation of a report of the conference to members of the House of Commons at the House of Commons.
- ❖ The identification of key citizenship issues for providers of education opportunities for adults.
- ❖ Enjoyment and increased potential for community service.

Target Participants

This conference is for

- ❖ Policy makers, MPs, MEPs, members of local authorities
- ❖ Policy informers, press, media
- ❖ Older people active in older people's groups
- ❖ Voluntary organisations concerned with older people
- ❖ Service deliverers concerned with older people
- ❖ Education authorities
- ❖ Educational organisations, Education centres, University Extra-Mural, WEA
- ❖ Employers organisations, DTI, CBI, IMS, IER.

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Programme

10.00	Registration, tea/coffee
10.30	Conference opening address Bridget, Lady Plowden DBE
10.50	The Curriculum for Older Citizens - an analysis of the citizenship roles of older people identifying the learning agendas involved. Mark Abrams - Director of Research Unit - Age Concern 1976-1985
11.30	Plenary
12.00	Lunch
13.30	Workshops - see below
15.00	Plenary - recommendations from workshops
15.40	Action in the interim - a summary of directions forward Sue Gardener - Vice Principal Westminster Adult Education Institute.

Workshop Sessions

1	Incomes	(a) Benefits	Liz Clarke - SEARCH PROJECT Newcastle Upon Tyne
		(b) Employment	Bernard Casey - Public Finance Foundation
2	Women's studies		Mary Kennedy - Birkbeck College, London University, Centre for Extra-Mural Studies
3	English for older speakers of other languages and elderly refugees		Maria Manchego - Director Standing Conference of Ethnic Minority Senior Citizens
4	Older people who are carers		Joanna Bornat - Open University Cheni Kalra - Woodberry Down Over 60s Project
5	Training and skills for voluntary and unpaid work		Peter Lynn - Survey of voluntary activities in the UK

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Conference

Education and Training for Older People

A conference which addresses a vocational curriculum for adults past retirement age. Themes include

- * Training for citizenship
- * Incomes, Pensions and Employment
- * Women's studies
- * English for older speakers of other languages and elderly refugees
- * Older people who are carers
- * Keeping up to date and fulfilling ambitions

The conference is for policy makers and informers in education, employment and local government and retired people who have an active interest in theme areas.

Representation of older people is sought from amongst older people who are keen to develop these ideas in local organisations

The conference organisers will visit interested groups to discuss representation at the conference

There will be a series of training sessions before the conference for older people who wish to develop and update their conference participation skills.

Conference Date 1st April 1992

Conference Venue University of London Union, Malet St.

Fees Organisation £25, Individual £10, Concession £3

Details from Maureen Cooper, Education Resources for Older People, The City Lit, Bolt Court Centre, London EC4A 3DY

Participants

- B. Adebisi
 S. Arnett
 B. Atherley
 J. Barber
 T. Barry
 J. Bornat, OU Dept. Health & Social Welfare
 R. Brawne, Older Women's Ed. Group
 M. Brown
 S. Campbell, Goldsmith's College
 N. Capon, Family Welfare Association
 C. Coker
 M. Cooper EdROP
 N. Crowe
 H. Crisford, Family Welfare Association
 Z. Curtis, EdROP
 J. Daniels
 G. Francis Chartered Society of Physiotherapists
 G. Frear, Video
 I. Freidmann
 S. Gardener, Westminster Education
 M. Geddes
 S. Gibbons, Age Concern Enfield
 R. Gilham, Wandsworth Adult College
 J. Grant, The City Lit
 C. Gray
 E. Guichard
 E. Guy, Pensioners' Link
 M. Hampson, Pensioners' Action
 A. Harding, City Lit Building Services
 G. Harrington, U3A
 D. Hayter
 E. Hubbard
 J. Hunt, BBC Radio Education
 C. Kalra, Woodberry Down Over 60s
 M. Kennedy, Birkbeck College, CEMS
 H. Klein, Association for Lifelong Learning
 L. Klein
 M. Lewis, Age Concern, Hackney
 M. Longlin
 M-A. Manchego-Pellanne, Standing Conference of Ethnic Minority Senior Citizens
 B. Marshall, Pensioners for Peace
 C. Marshall, National Pensioners' Convention
 C. Marson
 L. McKenzie
 T. Meehan, City Lit Building Services
 D. Monk, Centre for Policy on Ageing
 R. Mooney, Lewisham Age Concern
 C. Newman, Greater London Forum for the Elderly
 A. Patel, Ashram Lambeth
 A. Picton, Brent Pensioners' Action
 L. Pine, Mary Ward Centre
 A. Pizer, Pensioner's Voice
 D. Plamping, Pensioners for Peace
 R. Popplestone, The City Lit
 H. Portseigne
 V. Rahman
 S. Ray, Kurdistan Workers Association
 S. Richards, Westminster Adult Education
 A. Robinson
 L. Rosewell
 D. Sacher, Housebound Learners
 N. Scott, Older Feminists Network
 J. Scribbins, Wandsworth Adult College
 A. Shann
 S. Leslie
 M. Sidell, OU
 A. Smutts, Westminster Adult Education
 S. Spong, L B Lewisham Equalities Unit
 F. Stone
 S. Stewart Hillingdon Community Education Service
 D. Sylven, Abbey Community Centre
 I. Umelo, EdROP
 I. Vernet
 S. Watson
 P. Webb, WEA (London District)
 M. Whyberd, Pensioners Link K & C
 C. Williams
 B. Wynne, U3A

Study Day Aims

To address the issues of **"Training for Continuing Citizenship"**

To develop ideas in discussion around the themes of:-

- 1a Income: Pensions and Benefits
- 1b Income: Employment
- 2 Women's studies
- 3 English for speakers of other languages and elderly refugees
- 4 Older people who are carers
- 5 Training and skills for voluntary and unpaid work

To develop a debate on intergenerational equity by issuing a report of the day to policy makers and to inform providers and users.



Older Learners "Education for Continuing Citizenship"

A Study Day

Programme

Saturday 6th June 1992
Bolt Court Centre (off Fleet Street)

- 10:00 Registration, name labels and workshop selection
- 10:30 Welcome and introduction to the day
Pam Webb
Workers Educational Association
London Region
- 10:40 Opening address -
Education, Citizenship and Old Age -
Jenny Scribbins
Principal Wandsworth Adult College
- 11:00 Plenary
- 12:00 LUNCH
- 13:00 Outline of afternoon and direction to workshops -
Zelda Curtis
Older Women's Education Group.

13:15 Workshops

Income - pensions & benefits
Income - employment
Women's Studies -
English for speakers of other languages and elderly refugees -
Older people who are carers
Training and skills for voluntary and unpaid work

Shirley Spong
Ros Gilham
Mary Kennedy

Anjana Patel
Joanna Bornat
& Mrs Kalra

Maureen Cooper

13:45 Discussion

14:15 Agreeing decision about content of report

14:35 Plenary - **reports from all workshops**

15:10 **Bringing the strands together -
Creating the citizenship curriculum** -
Sue Gardener - Director of Studies,
Westminster Adult Education Service.

15:45 Evaluation, Tea and close

APPENDIX 5

Older people who are students in adult education have voiced their concerns about the changes in their learning opportunities. They note increase in fees, reductions in programme and the relocation of learning groups to less accessible venues. What has not featured significantly in this concern is the exclusion of the older student from even that which is on offer. That is, they do not follow vocationally oriented courses leading to some form of accreditation.

This concentration of older students in particular, and arguably restricted, parts of the curriculum has always been of concern to EdROP, for example the concentration on crafts and gentle exercise (Cooper & Bomat 1988). The current focus of statutory support for adult education on other areas shows this concern to have been well-founded. Are older students getting less access to learning opportunities than younger age groups? To test this hypothesis we looked at the curriculum offer in areas defined as citizenship and tried to identify take-up by older students.

We wrote to statutory providers in inner London boroughs (we had to limit the research and our immediate neighbourhoods seemed a reasonable sample and more than enough for our limited resources to cover). We also made initial enquiries attempting to identify centres which offered a course or courses in the area of interest. We tried to identify a contact person, someone concerned with the curriculum areas under scrutiny, so that we could get as informed a response as possible. We had a hunch that an analysis by older age group would not be possible from the global statistics which institutions hold and that we would need to get as close to people concerned with delivery as we could.

Our questionnaire was addressed to each of the curriculum areas and looked for numbers of courses offered in that area in the 91-92 session. We then asked about target groups for the courses, numbers of students (a) 55 - retirement age and (b) over retirement age; timing of class and length of course; costs and concessions; accreditation.

References

- Cooper, M. & Bomat, J. (1988) *Equal Opportunity or Special Needs: Combatting the Woolly Bunny*. *J Educational Gerontology* 3 (1), 28-41.

	Response % replies to survey	Take up actual no. students recorded 55-ret ret+	Availability concessionary fees	Accreditation no. of courses accredited	Number of courses taken up 55-ret ret+	Courses on offer
Income: Benefits	28.5%	0 0 (1)	all	0	0 0	3
Income: Employment	20.8%	4 2 (2)	limited (3)	8	0 0	11 (4)
ESOL	30.3%	5 4 (5)	limited (6)	14	0 0	51 (7)
Voluntary work	18.5%	4 0	all	6	4 0	7
Caring	18.1%	0 0	all	4	0 0	4
women's Studies	40.3%	19 7	limited (8)	7	2 0	38 (9)

Analysis of questionnaire returns

Notes refer to following details.

Geographical spread over the area is very roughly indicated by borough.

Each map records the number of centres surveyed and number of responses.

Income: Benefits - work about benefits and pensions. Courses such as welfare rights would come into this category. Any courses which would enable people to maximise their incomes through benefit payments.



Survey:

We sent out questionnaires to 14 centres

Response:

We received replies from 4 centres.

Offer:

3 courses

Of the four replies one identified a welfare rights courses running in the morning and being repeated in the evening. So there were two courses on offer. They were targeted at welfare rights advisers. One centre could not identify any work in this area in the curriculum.

One centre returned an ambiguous reply about a pre-access/pre-study skills course, however no student over 55 was enrolled on the course.

Take-up 55+

No students over 55 were enrolled.

One course was described as a club for retired females and males where all students were over retirement age but no enrolment number was given.(1)

Cost:

All offered concessionary fees without a limit on the number available.

Accreditation:

No course was accredited

Income : Employment -work about re-entering employment. Courses which support people in job search, interview technique, cv writing, identifying skills.



Survey:

We sent out questionnaires to 24 centres

Response:

Five centres responded

Offer:

11 courses were on offer plus a note that all ESOL, Fresh Start and Access courses covered this work, but no number of such courses given.(4)

Take-up 55+

4 students 55 - retirement

2 students over retirement

+ ALL (no number) in 50+ group (2)

Cost

One course had a limit of 25% on the number of concessionary places (3)

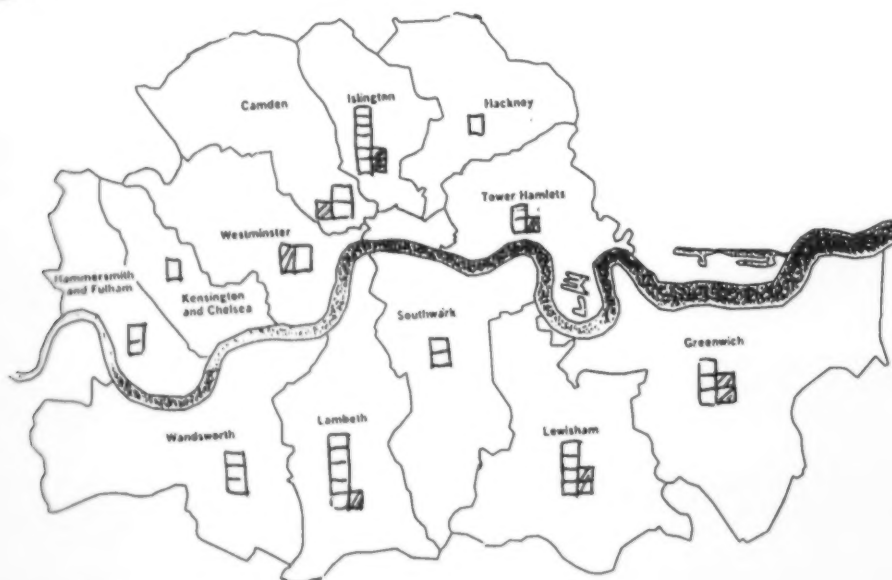
Accreditation:

8 courses were accredited. The course for over 50s had no accreditation

Range

Studies in Business for Speakers of Other Languages; Open Learning; Adult Foundation; 50+ Group; Newstart: Clothes Production; Fashion for Women Returners; Basic Food Hygiene; Teaching in Adult Education; Guiding Tourists; Opportunities for Women.

English for Speakers of Other Languages: courses/learning opportunities for refugees/speakers of other languages.



Survey:

We sent out questionnaires to 33 centres

Response:

Ten centres responded

Offer:

51 courses were on offer plus two general responses of 'a large programme' but no numbers (7)

Take-up 55+

32 of the 51 courses definitely had no students 55yrs+.

One centre had a special, mixed level class for elderly Asian students but no figures for numbers attending. No figures were available for students 55+ in the rest of the programme.

One centre identified 4 students over retirement age in two classes and 5 students 55-retirement age in the same classes.

The two general responses described 'a large roll-on/roll-off programme, all levels' but had no figures for enrolments over 55 or over. One had a special class in a Vietnamese old people's club with possibly 10 students and the suggestion that not more than 1 or 2 over 55 yrs in the rest of the programme.

Cost

One centre sent details of 19 courses with fees of £60, £90 and £150 and no concessions.(6) The other centres offered concessionary fees.

Accreditation

LOCF; RSA; C&G; CNA; BTEC First National; GCSE; Centra;

Neither special course had accreditation

Volunteering: courses or learning groups which provide for people working in voluntary organisations or community groups, or in any other location where they are using learning to support their unpaid work.



Survey:

We sent out questionnaires to 27 centres

Response:

Five centres responded

Offer:

7 courses were on offer.

Take-up 55+

Three courses did not have information about 55 yrs+ enrolment available. 2 courses had no enrolment by students 55yrs +. 4 students 55-retirement age were enrolled on two courses. No student over retirement age was enrolled.

Cost

All courses offered concessionary fees. There was no limit to the number of places at concessionary rates per course.

Accreditation

CSLA; C&G; CCPE;CNA;Access Cert; LOCF; GCSE RSA

Range

Recreation and Leisure; Work With Elderly; Sports Leaders; Introduction to Youth & Community Work; Modular Access; Modular Adult Programme; Diploma in the Organisation of Community Groups.

Courses for Carers: Including child care, informal caring, courses for people whose paid work is caring, or for organisations concerned with carers



Survey:

We sent out questionnaires to 22 centres

Response:

Four centres responded

Offer:

4 courses were on offer.

Take-up 55+

No course had any student over 55.

Cost

All had concessionary fees for all places.

Accreditation

All courses were accredited

Range

Access to CQSW; Playgroup Leaders Course; Creche Workers Course; Caring for the Sick.

Women's Studies: including access to non-traditional opportunities for women as well as courses which address directly a feminist analysis of society/social structures



Survey

We sent out questionnaires to 30 centres.

Response

We received replies from 13 centres.

Offer

38 courses were on offer, plus a general response indicating a programme of 'various short courses, mostly evening, from one day to 24 weeks'.(9)

Take-up 55+

	55 -60	60+
Known	19	7
Info not avail		22 23
none	5	9
all	0	0

One course had a target group of women aged 40 - 70 yrs. This was the only mention of a maximum age limit.

Cost:

2 courses had no concessions (both lead to post graduate certificate or diploma).(8)

3 courses offered concessions but these were limited to 25% of places.

33 courses had no limit to the numbers of concessionary places on each course.

Accreditation:

15 courses offered no information about accreditation

16 gave no accreditation

7 courses were accredited

Range:

Five groupings were identifiable.

Access to Higher Education and Return to Study;

Feminist Studies; New Technology/Non-Traditional Employment; Assertiveness;

Health Alternatives for Women

Conclusions

Response

We don't know how many courses are on offer in this curriculum. We made our contacts through the details given in 'Floodlight' (1) which catalogues an enormous range and quantity of offers to students. However, the significant response was that this aspect of take-up is not monitored. There is no targeting of students post 55 years. The few students who take up learning offers are the exception and where special groups are created no monitoring of take-up happens.

Administratively it is difficult to collect the information, especially 55 -retirement, as individuals often resist - 'not more bureaucracy' ' more paper? save trees'. In this instance we took the trouble to identify people having contact with the student groups, people who might be expected to give a guide if there was take-up. What emerges is very low take-up from this very large population.

Cost

One thing which has always been an issue but has been reported more frequently in the London region since the abolition of the Inner London Education Authority, is the availability of concessionary fees to people over retirement age. Where once it was possible for inner London residents to travel between boroughs and pay standard concessionary fees, this is no longer the case. Individuals living on borough boundaries have to make individual cases for discretions to be made. Others give up and reduce their range of activities in the public domain. A more dignified and equal

status could be achieved by a study card, similar to the pensioners' travel card, which would entitle holders to access to learning opportunities. This of course begs the question of availability and overall cost of education courses.

Accreditation

Very little of the work surveyed carried accreditation for older students. Whilst examination against the clock, at the end of a course is appropriate for very few studies in this curriculum, some evaluation and recording of progress and achievement is a reasonable expectation for students. Should they wish to progress through more formal learning to different levels and status of qualification, an account of recent learning which carries some credit is needed.

With such limited and incomplete data only tentative conclusions are possible. The most significant feature is the lack of information about this age group in the area of citizenship education. If that means that the potential of learning to support people in these public aspects of their lives throughout life stages, and particularly for the large numbers of people now in the later life stages, has yet to occur to providers, then that is a severe criticism. This is especially the case when older people are so often identified and targeted as carers and volunteers. The lack of support for these responsibilities is noteworthy and regrettable.

(1) *Floodlight: London's guide to part-time day and evening classes 1991-92* (London : ALA/LBA)

Citizenship, Adult Learning and Old Age

'Creating a citizenship curriculum is a challenge to the imagination, and naming the tasks helps us to work at it'. Sue Gardener, concluding the study day held at The City Lit, Bolt Court Centre, on 6th June 1992.

The study day began the naming of the tasks 'so all possible forms of support for the social contribution of older people would be identified and would not fall down the middle between vocational and recreational education'.

This is a succinct account of the concentrated thinking of many informed minds, a majority of whom are over state retirement age, about the access older people have to learning opportunities.

£3.50

